

Opportunity Notice – 2/22/08

Funding Guidance

**Local Water Quality Improvement Projects Targeting
Nonpoint Source Fecal Coliform Reduction
(TMDL Implementation)**

DEADLINE: 4/30/08, 5 PM

Information Sessions:

3/17/08, Columbia
3/19/08, Florence
3/24/08, Greenville
3/25/08, Charleston



Introduction

South Carolina's Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), Bureau of Water (BOW), Watersheds and Planning Section is soliciting proposals from local stakeholder groups or governmental entities as well as other agencies, institutions and organizations interested in applying for funding¹ for Local Water Quality Improvement Projects. These projects will support the restoration of waterbodies not meeting water quality standards for fecal coliform bacteria across the state through implementation of an approved TMDL. Due to limited available funding, DHEC anticipates selecting up to three projects through this process, thus interested parties are encouraged to partner.

A TMDL or Total Maximum Daily Load is a calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can receive and still meet water quality standards. TMDLs specify the **pollutant reduction** necessary for the waterbody to meet water quality standards.

TMDL Implementation

Once a TMDL has been developed, it needs to be implemented. Implementation can include any activities that will prevent/reduce pollutant inputs and allow water quality standards to be met. See page 7 for resources on potential activities for these projects.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the complete documents describing eligible approved TMDLs located on the DHEC website (<http://www.scdhec.gov/environment/water/tmdl/tmdlsc.htm>). Hard copies may be requested from Watershed Managers (contact information on page 8). Only those proposals that reflect a clear understanding of the target watershed(s) and associated TMDL recommendations will be considered.

TMDLs Available for Implementation Funding

TMDLs eligible for funding can be found online at <http://www.scdhec.gov/environment/water/grants.htm>. Both a sortable Excel file and printable PDF file are available at this location. Each station listed is considered an individual TMDL, though it may be included in one, larger TMDL document that includes other stations. TMDLs marked with an asterisk (*) indicate Priority Watersheds (see page 3 for more information).

¹ Under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act, the US EPA awards a Nonpoint Source Implementation Grant to DHEC to fund eligible projects that support the implementation of the South Carolina NPS Management Program.

General Proposal Guidelines

For information on any of the following guidelines, please **contact Meredith Murphy** at 803-898-4222 or murphymb@dhc.sc.gov.

Activities NOT Eligible

Section 319 funds may not be used to implement requirements of draft or final NPDES permits, including Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) Phase II, construction, or industrial stormwater permits. ***In areas where a portion of the TMDL is within a MS4 designation, only activities that are outside of the scope of the permit or part of the watershed outside of the MS4 area are eligible for funding.*** Funds may not be used to pay for requirements under a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan for a permitted animal operation.

Funding and Project Period

Proposals will be considered for projects that are three (3) years in length with a maximum amount of Federal 319 funds of \$300,000. Projects covering large geographical areas or complex watersheds may apply for longer project lengths or additional funding upon *PRIOR approval and significant justification*. DHEC anticipates awarding three (3) projects from this solicitation.

Section 319 projects are funded by quarterly reimbursement. DHEC is not liable for any costs by the grantee prior to the date of grant agreement approval, and no payment in advance of the final approval can be made.

Please note that the State Revolving Fund (SRF) might be more suitable for funding very large projects. You may review the SRF information on the web (<http://www.scdhec.gov/environment/water/srf.htm>). SRF provides lower interest rate loans for nonpoint source (NPS) projects.

Non-Federal Match Requirement

All proposals must provide for a minimum **forty percent (40%) non-federal match**. Non-federal match funds may be cash or in-kind services and must be from non-federal sources (See resources on page 10). Match activities must meet the same eligibility requirements as the federally funded portion of the grant listed above. All of the match must be fully documented. Proposals must identify the agency/organization(s) providing non-federal match and amounts.

Total Project Cost = Federal Funds (60%) + Match Funds (40%)

Monitoring

DHEC will continue to monitor water quality; therefore additional monitoring may not be necessary. Justification and details of any monitoring considered part of the project should be discussed with DHEC prior to submittal. Contact Meredith Murphy (803-898-4222) to discuss any monitoring plans.

Food and Promotional Items

Prior approval must be obtained if food or certain promotional items will be purchased with 319 funds.

Application Review Process

Proposals must be received by 5 PM on Wednesday, April 30, 2008. A Review Committee composed of representatives from State and Federal agencies, environmental groups, and industry associations will select eligible projects for funding. Applicants will be notified of selection within forty-five (45) days of the close of the application period. From the time that the Review Committee evaluates the proposals until the grant agreement is signed will be approximately ninety (90) days. DHEC reserves the right to reject all proposals and make no awards.

Project Selection Strategy and Priorities

Projects will be selected using the following strategy:

- ❖ Will the project address *all* sources of the target pollutant in project area?
- ❖ Does the proposal reflect an in-depth knowledge of the watershed?
- ❖ Does the proposal *clearly* define roles and responsibilities (appropriate use of partnerships)?
- ❖ Is the approach technically sound with a high likelihood of success?
- ❖ Is the budget reasonable?
- ❖ Is the budget balanced appropriately among categories for scope of work proposed?
- ❖ Does the project stress on-the-ground BMP implementation?
- ❖ Does the project include all required steps?
- ❖ Is there reasonable assurance that the proposed project will correct the water quality impairment?

Priority will be given to:

- ❖ Projects within a Priority Watershed.
SCDHEC and EPA Region IV have established four priority watersheds across the state. These include the following HUCs: 03050109, 03060106, 03050205, and 03050202-060. TMDLs in priority watersheds that are eligible for implementation under this opportunity are designated with an asterisk () as part of the eligible TMDL listing (<http://www.scdhec.gov/environment/water/grants.htm>). While priority is given to projects within these watersheds, projects in other watersheds will also be considered with this opportunity.*
- ❖ Projects with other sources of funding (even other Federal sources) above and beyond the needed match amount.
- ❖ Projects that implement an entire TMDL rather than for a smaller geographic portion.
- ❖ Projects that include social marketing concepts as part of the outreach and education component.

If Your Project is Selected...

Grant Agreement

Approved projects will require the lead organization to enter into a grant agreement with DHEC which will include a number of terms and conditions, including, but not limited to, non-discrimination, record keeping and record retention, subcontracting, agreeing to an audit, and periodic reporting.

Reports

The grantee agrees to submit additional project-specific information, interim **quarterly** progress reports and a final closeout report that evaluates the project. The evaluation is to include a critique of approaches that were used, and recommendations for other similar projects.

Invoices and MBE/WBEs

DHEC will reimburse the grantee on a **quarterly basis**. The grantee agrees to submit quarterly invoices for federal and non-federal funds. The grantee also agrees to support minority and women-owned businesses whenever feasible and will submit **quarterly** MBE/WBE (Minority Business Enterprise/Women Business Enterprise) forms with each invoice.

Load Reduction Calculations

The grantee agrees to provide specific information (e.g. number of acres treated, lat/long of BMP, BMP size, number of livestock, number of septic tanks) for *each BMP* associated with this project in order to assist the Watershed Managers with required load reduction calculations. This information should be

provided as each BMP is sited and/or installed and will be provided no less than **quarterly** during the implementation phase of the project. SCDHEC will provide support to the grantee as needed, including training and technical assistance, to accomplish this requirement. Sample worksheets and forms are available upon request.

QA/QC Plan

All selected projects that include environmental monitoring, measurements, or data generation must have a DHEC-approved quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) plan. For projects that involve collecting water quality data, the QA/QC documentation will include a project specific monitoring plan. A copy of the QA/QC guidelines is available upon request.

GIS Data

All selected projects that have a Geographic Information System (GIS) component must follow EPA/DHEC GIS guidance. A copy of the GIS guidelines is available upon request and DHEC's web site (<http://www.scdhec.gov/environment/water/docs/319g-gis.pdf>).

Animal Feeding Operations (AFOs)

Proposals that include programs or activities projects that assist AFOs must include a provision to assure that any AFO that receives financial assistance pursuant to the grant has and will implement a comprehensive nutrient management plan as defined by EPA and DHEC.

Operation and Maintenance

Each Section 319 grant agreement will require that the project (i.e. BMPs) be properly operated and maintained in a manner consistent with Federal and state guidance.

Proposal Format

Applicants should submit a project proposal following the guidelines provided in this section. The proposal should be **no more than twelve (12) pages**, excluding commitment letters from project partners.

- a. **Project title.**
- b. **Lead organization and project manager:** The lead organization will be responsible for managing the proposed project. Provide a brief narrative description of the lead organization qualifications for this project. Please include a *name of project manager, title, mailing address, telephone and FAX numbers*, and an *email address*. This person should serve as the primary contact with DHEC for the duration of the project. Include the name and contact information of a supervisor or other alternate contact with the lead organization.
- c. **Agency/organization financial officer or grant administrator:** Include name, title, mailing address, telephone and FAX numbers, and an email address.
- d. **Federal Identification Number.**
- e. **Cooperating organizations or partnerships:** All cooperators/partners should be thoroughly familiar with the project before being listed as a cooperator/partner. Cooperators/partners should have substantial involvement/role in project implementation. **Clearly** describe each cooperator's/partner's responsibilities with the project. The lead project agency should attach project commitment letters from all cooperating/partnering organizations.
- f. **Project location:** Include the name of the waterbody, hydrologic unit code(s), and the county or counties.
- g. **TMDL:** State whether the project is going to implement the TMDL for the entire watershed or only a smaller portion of the watershed. If the project is just for a portion of the whole watershed, then a map (or GIS polygon) of the area must be included. Priority is given to projects that implement an entire watershed rather than a smaller portion.

- h. **Project abstract:** The project abstract should be **no more than one page** and should include all elements listed below:

Agency:

Project Title:

Funding: **Federal:** \$xx,xxx **Non-Federal:** \$xx,xxx

Project Length (in months):

Project Location (waterbody, HUC, county):

Background/Overview of Project:

Objectives/Goals of the Project:

Methods Employed:

- i. **Project description:** Your proposal **must include the following elements**. Please be as specific as possible for each element.

- i. A brief description of the impairment to be addressed.
 - ii. An identification of the sources of the target pollutants or groups of similar sources that will need to be controlled to achieve the load reductions established in the TMDL (e.g., X number of dairy cattle feedlots needing upgrading, including a rough estimate of the number of cattle per facility; Y acres of row crops needing improved nutrient management or sediment control; or Z linear miles of eroded streambank needing remediation).
 - iii. A description of the NPS management measures (see page 7 for examples) that will be implemented to achieve the load reductions established in the TMDL. Include an estimate of the load reductions expected for these management measures, recognizing the natural variability and the difficulty in precisely predicting the performance of management measures over time, and *an identification of the critical areas* in which those measures will be implemented to achieve the TMDL.
 - iv. Sources of technical and financial assistance needed, and/or authorities that will be relied upon, to implement the project.
 - v. A *measurable* information/education component that will be used to enhance public understanding of the project, and to encourage their participation in implementing NPS management measures. Preference will be given to projects containing a social marketing component (See resources on page 7).
 - vi. A schedule for implementing the NPS management measures that is reasonably expeditious.
 - vii. A description of interim, measurable milestones (events) that will occur throughout the implementation of the project and can be used to track project progress. Include start, completion, and reporting dates, and QA/QC plan approval if applicable. *Include quantifiable, specific outputs and deliverables, such as quarterly load reductions and progress reports, manuals, videos, maps, meetings, BMP installation, etc.* Include the month of the project by which each milestone should be completed.
 - viii. Specific criteria for evaluation: Describe the measures and practices of evaluation that will be used to measure the success of the project. Be sure to include evaluation in the project milestones. Quantify the expected improvements in terms of water quality. Examples can be provided upon request.
- j. **Project period:** Describe the length (in months) of the project, which should be no more than thirty-six months. Longer project periods are permissible with *prior approval and significant justification*.

- k. **Detailed itemized budget:** Budget categories include personnel, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual, indirect costs, and other (see example below). Include details of non-Federal funding. Provide a brief narrative justification for each budget category. Projects will be evaluated for cost effectiveness during the selection process; therefore, please ensure that the budget is reasonable.

Only the lead organization should include staff in the Personnel expenses categories (Salary, Fringe, and Indirect Charges). Partnering organizations are considered subcontractors and so all expenses relating to these entities should be included and itemized under Contractual. Contact Meredith Murphy (803-898-4222 or murphymb@dhec.sc.gov) for more information on compiling a budget.

SAMPLE BUDGET FORMAT			
BUDGET CATEGORIES	FEDERAL FUNDS	NON-FEDERAL FUNDS* <i>*List sources of non-federal funds</i>	TOTAL
Personnel (Salary) ¹ Personnel (Fringe) Travel ² Equipment ³ Supplies Contractual ⁴ Other ⁵ Indirect Charges ⁶			
TOTAL			

¹Itemize staffing costs including the number of hours, type of position, hourly rate excluding fringe or number of staff-years, type of position, and hourly rate excluding fringe (Lead organization staff ONLY)

²Show calculations for mileage

³Any **one** item \$1,500 or more

⁴Include all calculations (Partnering organizations' expenses should be included here)

⁵e.g. Rental fees, bid advertisement

⁶Approved Federal rate

Project Resources

➤ Information Sessions

To better address questions and to provide more specific information regarding this opportunity, DHEC staff will host four Information Sessions across the State:

Monday, March 17, 2008, 1-3 PM
SC DHEC, Training Room 1635
2600 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201

Wednesday, March 19, 2008 1:30-3:30 PM
SC DHEC, Florence Auditorium (1st Floor)
145 E. Cheves Street, Florence, SC 29506

Monday, March 24, 2008 1-3 PM
SCDHEC, Conference Room H (Bauer Room)
301 University Ridge, Greenville, SC 29601

Tuesday, March 25, 2008, 1-3 PM
SC DHEC, Hennessy Conference Room (302)
1362 McMillan Avenue, Suite 300,
Charleston, SC 29405

NPS staff and Watershed Managers will be available to answer questions and discuss ideas. Staff will describe each element of this guidance. ***All organizations and cooperators interested in submitting a proposal for this opportunity are encouraged to attend one of these sessions.*** To find out more about this session, contact a Watershed Manager or Meredith Murphy (see page 8 for contact information).

➤ **NPS Management Measures (Best Management Practices)**

Best Management Practices (BMPs), both structural and non-structural, should be the focus of the TMDL implementation process. A comprehensive technical document on methods to abate and control nonpoint pollution, *Guidance Specifying Management Measures for Sources of Nonpoint Pollution in Coastal Waters*, is located at <http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/MMGI/>. Refer to this website for some examples of BMPs for water quality improvement projects. This document is useful for guidance on BMP applications anywhere, not just in the coastal zone. Some South Carolina specific examples can be found in *SC Home-A-Syst*, *Farming for Clean Water in SC*, *SC's BMPs for Forestry*, *Backyard Buffers*, *Turning the Tide*, etc., which can be obtained from a Watershed Manager.

Other useful websites include: <http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/measurablegoals/part3.cfm>; <http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/categories.html>; <http://www.stormwatercenter.net/>; <http://www.epa.gov/ednrmrl/publications/books/handbook/index.htm>

➤ **Education and Outreach Activities**

Information on education and outreach activities and measurement tools can be found on the Getting in Step website (<http://www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/outreach/documents/getnstep.pdf>).

Additional information on the use of social marketing:

Water quality degradation from nonpoint source pollution is typically the result of decisions made, either consciously or unconsciously, by individuals from many backgrounds and a wide range of institutions. Reversing this water quality degradation often hinges on successfully identifying key behaviors or practices and persuading individuals and/or institutions to adopt different ways. This can be facilitated by the use of social marketing principles.

Projects with outreach components that incorporate social marketing principles proven to increase effectiveness may be selected for funding over similar projects that do not. Projects should strive to demonstrate how water quality would be protected, improved, or restored by applying key social marketing principles. *Getting Your Feet Wet with Social Marketing* is a great tool for incorporating social marketing principles into watershed programs and is available online at <http://www.ag.utah.gov/conservation/GettingYourFeetWet1.pdf>. For more information on social marketing, visit www.social-marketing.org/sm.html or contact Anne Marie Johnson, Manager, Outreach and Education Section (803-898-4168 or johnsoam@dhec.sc.gov).

Project proposals will benefit from including the following components (see above websites):

1. A workplan that identifies and assesses the existing undesirable and new desirable behaviors or practices, and the specific audience targeted for this change. The plan should also identify and assess important barriers for achieving behavior change and map out a strategy for removing these barriers.
2. A marketing (or implementation) strategy for “selling” the new behavior that considers costs to the target audience (time, money, convenience, etc), what’s in it for the target audience, and how and where to achieve effective promotion.
3. Demonstrated participation in the project by key stakeholder group(s).
4. Objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely (SMART).
5. Empirical evaluation of both the process and outcomes (e.g., what impact did the project have on the community norms, progress toward behavior change, adoption of beneficial practices and/or water quality?).

➤ **Non-Federal Match**

For more information regarding *match activities* and valuation of volunteer time:

<http://www.scdhec.gov/environment/water/docs/319match.pdf> and http://www.independentsector.org/programs/research/volunteer_time.html

Volunteer time is currently valued at \$18.77 per hour.

Who to Contact Regarding this RFP

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Proposal Checklist

- ☐ Double-check all calculations for accuracy
- ☐ Make sure your proposal is no more than 12 pages in length (not including commitment letters)
- ☐ Submit an original plus 10 copies (be sure to include copies of commitment letters and other supporting documentation)
- ☐ Submit all 3-hole punched
- ☐ DO NOT submit bound/stapled proposals
- ☐ Submit proposal electronically via e-mail to murphymb@dhec.sc.gov
(A CD may be submitted if proposal is too large to e-mail)
- ☐ **Send or deliver proposals to (Faxes are not acceptable):**
Attention: Meredith Murphy
SCDHEC Bureau of Water
Division of Water Quality
2600 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201

Dates to Remember

Information Sessions

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Proposal Due Date

April 30, 2008
5 PM